

the followers of Jesus would be first in line to protect any group from hate crimes . . . This bill protects both the rights of conservative religious people to voice passionately their interpretations of their scriptures and protects their fellow citizens from physical attack."

Many religious groups have expressed their support for the bill, including the Episcopal Church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, the Interfaith Alliance, the Presbyterian Church, the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism, the United Methodist Church, and the Congress of National Black Churches.

Over 10 years have passed since the Matthew Shepard Hate Crimes Prevention Act was first introduced in the Senate. Over 10 years have passed since Matthew Shepard was robbed, pistol whipped, tortured, tied to a fence, and left to die because he was gay. I commend Matthew's mother, Judy Shepard, for her years of inspiring advocacy that have brought us to this moment. Now is the time for the Senate to vote and show that we will not allow domestic terrorism to tear apart the fabric of our Nation and take the lives of innocent Americans. I urge my colleagues in the Senate to follow their hearts and minds and vote in favor of this legislation.●

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION, AND FORESTRY SUB- COMMITTEES

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry has adopted subcommittees for the 111th Congress. On behalf of myself and Senator CHAMBLISS, I ask unanimous consent that a copy of the subcommittees be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

UNITED STATES SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION & FORESTRY SUBCOMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS—111TH CONGRESS

Subcommittee on Rural Revitalization, Conservation, Forestry and Credit: Rural economic revitalization and quality of life; rural job and business growth; rural electrification, telecommunications and utilities; conservation, protection and stewardship of natural resources; state, local and private forests and general forestry; agricultural and rural credit.

Sen. Lincoln, Chair; Sen. Leahy; Sen. Stabenow; Sen. Nelson; Sen. Casey; Sen. Bennet.

Republican Designee, Ranking; Sen. Cochran; Sen. McConnell; Sen. Grassley; Sen. Thune.

Subcommittee on Energy, Science and Technology: Renewable energy production and energy efficiency improvement on farms and ranches and in rural communities; food and agricultural research, education, economics and extension; innovation in the use of agricultural commodities and materials.

Sen. Stabenow, Chair; Sen. Conrad; Sen. Nelson; Sen. Brown; Sen. Klobuchar; Sen. Bennet; Sen. Gillibrand.

Sen. Thune, Ranking; Sen. Lugar; Sen. Roberts; Sen. Johanns; Sen. Grassley; Republican Designee.

Subcommittee on Hunger, Nutrition, and Family Farms: Domestic and international nutrition and food assistance and hunger prevention; school and child nutrition programs; local and healthy food initiatives; futures, options and derivatives; pesticides; and general legislation.

Sen. Brown, Chair; Sen. Leahy; Sen. Baucus; Sen. Lincoln; Sen. Stabenow; Sen. Casey; Sen. Klobuchar; Sen. Bennet; Sen. Gillibrand.

Sen. Lugar, Ranking; Sen. Cochran; Sen. McConnell; Republican Designee.

Subcommittee on Production, Income Protection and Price Support: Production of agricultural crops, commodities and products; farm and ranch income protection and assistance; commodity price support programs; insurance and risk protection; fresh water food production.

Sen. Casey Chair; Sen. Leahy; Sen. Conrad; Sen. Baucus; Sen. Lincoln; Sen. Brown.

Sen. Roberts, Ranking; Sen. Cochran; Sen. Johanns; Sen. Grassley; Sen. Thune.

Subcommittee on Domestic and Foreign Marketing, Inspection, and Plant & Animal Health: Agricultural trade; foreign market development; domestic marketing and product promotion; marketing orders and regulation of agricultural markets and animal welfare; inspection and certification of plants, animals and products; plant and animal diseases and health protection.

Sen. Gillibrand, Chair; Sen. Conrad; Sen. Baucus; Sen. Nelson; Sen. Klobuchar.

Sen. Johanns, Ranking; Sen. Lugar; Sen. McConnell; Sen. Roberts.

COMMENDING PETER ROGOFF

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I would like to take a moment to recognize a very special member of my staff who has recently been confirmed by the Senate to take on a critical role in the Obama administration.

Peter Rogoff has served on the Appropriations Committee staff for the last 22 years and he has been the committee's senior transportation adviser for the majority of those years. For the past 9 years, as I have served as either chairman or ranking member of the Transportation Appropriations Subcommittee, I have had the opportunity to work closely with Peter.

Peter has been a trusted adviser to me and a dedicated public servant to the constituents of both my home State of Washington and the constituents of every member of the subcommittee. I know that Peter's drive, knowledge, and experience will be an outstanding asset to President Obama and Transportation Secretary LaHood's team.

Peter and I have worked together through many challenges over the years, none greater than the events of September 11 and the transportation security issues that we were confronted with after. Peter's efforts weren't just limited to aviation security but also included initiatives to strengthen security in passenger rail, transit systems, our ports and all the systems that connect them. During those difficult times, Peter's understanding of our transportation safety systems was fully evident.

It is a knowledge that comes with experience. And not just the kind of experience you gain from studying policy at

your desk, although I can attest that Peter has done a lot of that. It is the kind of experience you get from traveling out to accident sites, talking with inspectors, meeting with families, and working hands-on to ensure that we are taking steps to ensure that accidents are not repeated.

In the time that I have worked with Peter, he has regularly traveled across the country to participate in aviation, rail and ship inspections, and he has voluntarily gone to many accident sites. The expertise gained from these experiences has served this Congress and our country well in some very critical situations.

In fact, I still remember clearly the evening 2 years ago when we all watched in horror as the 1-35 bridge collapsed in Minneapolis. Immediately after that tragedy, I dispatched Peter to accompany Senator KLOBUCHAR to the scene, because I knew that he could help her identify the core issues and how the Federal Government could help.

Now I know that as FTA Administrator, Peter will face a set of wide-ranging challenges. But I also know that he has the transit know-how to hit the ground running. Peter will bring over two decades of working knowledge on financing, building, and safeguarding our country's transit systems.

I thank Peter for the guidance, enthusiasm, and expertise he has shown in the years he has led my efforts on addressing our country's transportation, housing and urban development needs. I also wish him luck as he takes on this tremendous responsibility and opportunity.

While his departure represents a big loss for our Appropriations Committee and my appropriations subcommittee, I respect and commend President Obama's decision to put Peter's expertise to work on addressing our country's transit future.

COMMENDING CAPTAIN B. HARL ROMINE JR.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, on behalf of myself and Senators SNOWE, ENSIGN, DEMINT, THUNE, WICKER, ISAKSON, VITTER, BROWNBACK, MARTINEZ, and JOHANNS, we would like to thank Captain Harl Romine for his service to the Nation and the U.S. Coast Guard.

Captain Romine has a long and distinguished career with the Coast Guard. From his enrollment in the U.S. Coast Guard Academy through his retirement later this month, Captain Romine has spent the better part of the last three decades serving his countrymen and protecting our Nation in the U.S. Coast Guard. During his service in the Coast Guard Captain Romine has exhibited the best characteristics of a Coast Guard officer: a deep dedication to duty, unsurpassed professionalism,

superior technical and operational expertise, and compassion as a pilot, leader, mentor, and friend.

Captain Romine has a distinguished career that is worthy of recognition by this Senate. Harl Romine—the son of a career Coast Guard officer—attended high school in Chantilly, VA, and graduated from the U.S. Coast Guard Academy in 1985 with a bachelor of science degree in government. Immediately following graduation he joined the fleet and served as a deck watch officer, law enforcement boarding officer, and weapons officer aboard the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter CHEROKEE. Upon completing his tour on the CHEROKEE, Captain Romine attended Navy Flight School to begin his career as a Coast Guard aviator a role in which he would truly distinguish himself. Upon receiving his “wings of gold” at flight school in Pensacola, Captain Romine began a career of service that would take him from the warm waters of the Gulf of Mexico to frigid seas of the Gulf of Alaska.

His first aviation assignment was to the Coast Guard's largest and busiest air station—Air Station Clearwater, FL, where he served as a duty standing pilot in the HH-3F “Pelican” helicopter performing a wide range of missions in the Atlantic and Caribbean regions, including Search and Rescue and drug enforcement operations.

In 1991 he was assigned to Air Station Kodiak where he continued to fly the HH-3F and then transitioned to the HH-60J “Jayhawk.” Four years later, he was transferred to Coast Guard Group Astoria, OR, where he served as the administration officer, supervising the administrative and personnel support for over 300 Coast Guard personnel.

In 1998, Captain Romine was assigned as the HH-60J standardization branch chief at the Coast Guard's Aviation Training Center in Mobile, AL. The young pilots trained under the tutelage of Captain Romine were a large part of the impressive Coast Guard Team that performed so heroically in the aftermath of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

In 2001, Captain Romine qualified in the HC-130H “Hercules” and returned to Kodiak, AK, where he served as the operations officer for Coast Guard Air Station Kodiak. During this tour he maintained a qualification in both the HH-60J “Jayhawk” and the HC-130 “Hercules” airframes and has the unique distinction of standing duty in both airframes during the same week and successfully executing a search and rescue case in both airframes during that week.

In 2004, Captain Romine received the ultimate honor and demonstration of the Coast Guard's trust in his abilities, when he received orders to serve as the commanding officer of Coast Guard Air Station Sitka, AK.

At the heart of his career of distinguished service is commitment to rescuing those in distress. Over his career Captain Romine has personally flown,

coordinated or supervised over 800 search and rescue cases resulting in over 600 lives saved. When Americans watch with pride as an orange helicopter plucks shipwrecked mariners from an icy sea or pulls stranded men and women off of roof tops in a flooded city, they should all know that it is men and women like Harl Romine who are piloting the aircraft risking their lives to save someone else's.

Captain Romine's service has not gone unrecognized by his commanders. For his distinguished and heroic service, he has been awarded the Meritorious Service Medal, the Air Medal, four Coast Guard Commendation Medals and three Coast Guard Achievement Medals.

Finally, for the last 3 years, Captain Romine has distinguished himself while serving as a Coast Guard fellow on the Senate Commerce Committee's Oceans, Atmosphere, Fisheries and Coast Guard Subcommittee. With the same technical expertise and devotion to duty demonstrated throughout his career as an aviator, Captain Romine earned the respect of all who have worked with him and has been an invaluable member of the Commerce Committee staff and will be sorely missed.

On July 17, Captain Romine will be retiring from the Coast Guard and will be bringing his impressive and distinguished career in the Coast Guard to an end. We would be remiss if we did not thank his family for “loaning” Harl to the Coast Guard for so many years. Life in the Coast Guard places great stress on families as well as servicemen. We want to thank Harl's wife Laura, and his sons Hank, Carson, and Sonny for all the sacrifices they have made.

Throughout his service to our Nation, whether standing the watch, teaching the next generation of pilots who now stand the watch, or commanding those who protected our Nation's mariners, Captain Romine has upheld the highest traditions of the Coast Guard. We would like to take this opportunity to personally commend Captain Romine for his service to our Nation, the Coast Guard and the Senate and thank him for all he has done in service to his country.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

REMEMBERING MAJOR GENERAL ROGER W. GILBERT

• Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, today I wish to honor the life of Major General Roger W. Gilbert who passed away on June 13, 2009 in Lenexa, KS. I would like to express my condolences to Major General Gilbert's family, in particular his wife of 58 years, Ruthie, his two daughters Carol and Marilee, his three granddaughters Brooke, Britni, and Allison, and his sister Beverly. They are in my thoughts and prayers.

Major General Gilbert led an honorable and extensive career which began upon his enlistment in the Army Air Corps in 1943 while he was a student at Drake University. After his pilot training, he courageously took two combat tours in Europe during World War II. He flew 50 missions in B-17s and Mosquitoes and upon his accomplishment he was awarded with the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Air Medal with five clusters and five battle stars.

In 1946, he joined the Air National Guard and flew another 50 combat missions in B-26 bombers during the Korean war. He then became squadron and later on wing commander of the Air Guard units and accumulated 7,200 hours of pilot time, 4,000 of which were served as a jet pilot. Major General Gilbert amassed a large amount of medals throughout his service career, including the Legion of Merit with one oak leaf cluster and another 38 awards.

Major General Gilbert retired from his career of 42 years of service in the Air Force and Air Guard. He previously was the adjutant general of the Iowa National Guard, as well as the former commander of the 132nd Fighter Wing of the Iowa National Guard, which was given three national recognitions as being an outstanding unit of the Air Force. After retirement, he spent his time hunting, skeet shooting, and taking his golden retriever, Major, out to the field.

The career of Major General Gilbert was a distinguished one and his 42-year commitment to serving the people of the United States and the State of Iowa is worthy of much admiration and honor. I am grateful for his service and pay tribute to his patriotism. •

REMEMBERING JACK EBERSPACHER

• Mr. JOHANNES. Mr. President, today I wish to pay tribute to a leader in American agriculture.

Jack Eberspacher, president and chief executive officer of the Agricultural Retailers Association, passed away on July 5, 2009, in Reston, VA. He had been courageously fighting cancer since April.

Jack was a dynamic leader and was admired throughout the industry as a strong and effective advocate for agriculture.

Jack was born in Seward, NE, in 1954. He earned an animal science degree at the University of Nebraska and completed coursework toward a master's degree in business administration at Texas Tech University.

After several years working in various agribusiness positions throughout the United States, Jack was named the chief executive officer of the National Grain Sorghum Producers Association in 1989. His colleagues there remember him as a creative man who loved pushing the envelope and emphasizing new ideas. He focused the Association's efforts on the needs of the producers and bringing stakeholders together.